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Personally, Edward Burgess endeared himself to all closely associated with him by his uniform good nature and fairness. He never plumed himself in the slightest degree upon his successes, and the public adulation which crowned him after the international races was received with gratification, but did not in the least disturb his equability or increase his self-esteem. His untimely death was a national loss, for there is no doubt among those that knew him that he was capable of steady progressive development, a quality of body and mind which, in combination with genius, gave strong assurance of a future greater even than the past.

GEORGE BASSETT CLARK.

George Bassett Clark was born in Lowell, Mass., on February 14, 1827. His early education was received at the Grammar School, the High School, and afterwards at Mr. Whitman's private school in Cambridge, to which place his father had removed in 1835. In 1844, the subject of this notice entered Phillips Academy at Andover, where he completed his literary education, and began for himself an original course of practical training in the work which was subsequently to distinguish him. He had already shown an interest in the mechanical arts, and had made his proficiency with the lathe a source of some little profit to himself, by manufacturing toys for his juvenile accquaintances. He now procured a piece of an old bell, which he took home with him, and from which he undertook to construct the speculum of a reflecting telescope. Undeterred by the doubts of his elders as to the possibility of bringing his scheme to a successful conclusion, he presently gave them a practical proof of his ability by producing an instrument with which a satisfactory view of Jupiter and its satellites could be obtained. This first success encouraged him to attempt the construction of refracting as well as of reflecting telescopes; and his father, becoming interested in his son's experiments, was thus led to join him in the work. Neither the father nor the son, however, seems at this time to have expected seriously to undertake the business of an optician. Mr. Alvan Clark continued to employ himself as a portrait-painter, while the younger man, after finishing his course at the Phillips Academy, engaged in the work of civil engineering, and was employed in that capacity upon the Boston and Maine and the Ogdensburg and Lake Champlain Railroads.

The discovery of gold in California, in 1848, turned his attention to still another industry, and he was among the first who hastened to the new land of promise. His fortune differed little from that of the greater number of his fellow emigrants, and, after several months of adventure and hardship, he returned, richer in experience than in worldly goods. In his journey to California, he crossed the Isthmus of Panama in the manner then customary, by a boat voyage up the Chagres River and by difficult paths across the hills beyond. On one occasion, his guides, whose language he could not speak, armed him and themselves with clubs, and set out with him upon an expedition the purpose of which he could not conjecture. It appeared that their object was peaceable, being only to obtain a supply of provisions in the way of legitimate trade, but that the clubs were necessary to defend the party against the dogs who had to be encountered before the trading could begin. In California itself provisions were still more difficult to obtain, and when obtained were of the worst quality; moreover, the first part of the return voyage was attended by many depressing circumstances. The excitement of travel and adventure was probably overbalanced in Mr. Clark's mind by the painful impression made upon his kindly nature by the scenes which he had witnessed, for in after life he appeared to dislike recalling the incidents of his expedition.

Upon his return, he resumed the work which had most interested him in his boyhood, and opened a shop in East Cambridge for making and repairing instruments. He was soon joined in this business by his father and by his younger brother, although his father still kept his Boston studio open for several years. Mr. George B. Clark's personal history from this time is in great measure that of the firm of Alvan Clark and Sons, which he had been so largely instrumental in founding. The business was continued in East Cambridge until 1860, when it was removed to the situation in Cambridgeport where it is still conducted.

While Mr. George B. Clark was thoroughly familiar with the purely optical portion of the work undertaken by the firm, the part of that work which ordinarily depended chiefly upon him was that of providing the mountings of telescopes, and of planning and making the metallic parts of scientific apparatus of various kinds. In this work he was highly ingenious, and his ingenuity was, if possible, surpassed by his perseverance. He was frequently called upon to contrive means for the execution of new plans which had occurred to men of science, and he could not be defeated by the mechanical difficulties, which were often great, in the way of the desired result, when he had once assured himself that the principles involved in the plans were correct. With a mere verbal description, or at most a rough sketch, of the instrument required, he would readily undertake the solution of the frequently perplexing problems which presented themselves when its actual construction was begun. When it was finished, he was equally indefatigable in experimenting with it, not only before it left the workshop, but after it had been delivered to the purchaser, until it had been brought into such condition as fully to answer its purpose. He was indifferent to the mere external appearance of his work, but spared no pains to make the results to be obtained with it as perfect as possible.

Upon the criterion laid down by Solomon, few men have ever been as well qualified as Mr. Clark to stand before kings; for he was preeminently a man diligent in his business. This virtue, no doubt, had the corresponding defect, that he was almost incapable of allowing himself reasonable time for rest and recreation. The holidays of his workmen were usually spent by him in solitary labor, directed to testing and improving the instruments in course of construction, or in consultation with some scientific customer upon the best means of evading the difficulties which were hindering the execution of some new plan. When an important order was in the hands of the firm, he could not rest till the work was accomplished. Thus, when the instruments for the national observations of the transit of Venus in 1874 were to be constructed, and, owing to delay in the receipt of definite orders the time for their execution was very limited, Mr. Clark labored so unremittingly to accomplish what was required that as soon as the instruments were sent off he was prostrated by illness, from the effects of which, it is apprehended, he never fully recovered. Still, notwithstanding weariness and imperfect health, the remainder of his life exhibited the same continuous industry which had previously marked it. During this period, the equipment of the Observatory of Harvard College was largely increased. Numbers of new instruments applicable to new forms of observation were called for from the firm of Alvan Clark and Sons; and Mr. George B. Clark devoted to supplying these needs, not merely the attention due to a customer, but the interest of a friend. Such men will always be overworked, for their willingness and ability naturally overwhelm them with calls for their assistance.

To enumerate the important instruments in the construction of which Mr. Clark took part would be merely to give a list of the celebrated telescopes and other pieces of apparatus which have been furnished during the last forty years by the firm of Alvan Clark and Sons. But attention may be called particularly to those instruments in which ingenuity of metallic construction was especially necessary; for this, as has been said, was the province in which Mr. George B. Clark's abilities were most marked. When the gearing required in the apparatus for determining the velocity of light, constructed for Professor Newcomb, proved to be soon worn out by the rapidity of revolution required, Mr. Clark succeeded in applying the necessary remedy by introducing raw hide into a certain part of the apparatus, instead of metal. Among the instruments made for Harvard College Observatory and other institutions of Cambridge and Boston, in the construction of which his skill and zeal were peculiarly advantageous, may be mentioned several large spectroscopes, photometers, and photographic instruments.

The singularly genial and kindly temperament which Mr. Clark inherited from his beloved father insured him cordial regard, and even affectionate sympathy, among a wider circle than that of his immediate relatives and associates. His face and manner bore a stamp of refinement of feeling which would not have been expected in a man whose education and whose occupations were of so exclusively practical a character. His incessant devotion to his business left him no leisure for those pursuits which are traditionally regarded as tending to promote gentleness as well as gentility; but nature had supplied him in this respect with more merit than most men can acquire by training.

He was married in 1857 to Miss J. M. Mosely, who survives him; but he left no children. Although the failure of his health had for several years been evident, his death by apoplexy on December 20, 1891, found him still busy with his work. His memory will be cherished by all who knew him, and the instruments which he planned will long testify to his skill by the scientific results which they furnish.

WILLIAM PRESCOTT DEXTER.

WILLIAM PRESCOTT DEXTER was the son of Franklin Dexter and of Elizabeth, daughter of Judge William Prescott. He came of distinguished ancestry. His great-grandfather on the mother's side commanded the American troops at Bunker Hill. The historian William Hickling Prescott was his uncle. His grandfather, Samuel Dexter, was an eminent statesman. Both his grandfathers were members of this Academy, and they held high rank as lawyers, as did his father also. All of them were prominent citizens. So too was his distant kinsman, Aaron Dexter, M.D., likewise a member of this Academy,